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SENATE BILL 6742

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State of Washington

60th Legislature

2008 Regular Session

By Senators Rasmussen, McAuliffe, Tom, and Kline

Read first time 01/22/08. Referred to Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education.

1 AN ACT Relating to specialized individualized education programs  
2 for students with autism; adding a new section to chapter 28A.155 RCW;  
3 and creating a new section.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

5 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that:

6 (1) Autism is a developmental disability significantly affecting  
7 verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction and is  
8 generally evident before age three;

9 (2) Autism adversely affects a student's educational performance;

10 (3) Autistic behaviors not only may make life difficult for people  
11 with autism but also may make life challenging for their families,  
12 health care providers, and teachers;

13 (4) Families coping with this devastating condition are searching  
14 for answers about its causes, diagnosis, prevention, and treatment;

15 (5) Strategies about how to best prevent, identify, treat, and  
16 accommodate the needs of individuals with autism and their families are  
17 urgently needed;

18 (6) Early intervention is critical for affected children to gain  
19 maximum benefit from current therapies; and

1 (7) Autism-specific individualized education programs better assist  
2 people with autism as well as assisting the families, health care  
3 providers, and the teachers who care for those with the condition.

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** A new section is added to chapter 28A.155  
5 RCW to read as follows:

6 (1) The office of the superintendent of public instruction, in  
7 consultation with the autism task force and representatives from state  
8 and nonprofit agencies that provide programs and services for people  
9 with autism, shall develop guidelines for autism-specific  
10 individualized education programs (IEPs) that address the unique needs  
11 of students with autism.

12 (2) The autism-specific individualized education program guidelines  
13 shall consider, but need not be limited to:

14 (a) Extended educational programming, including extended day and  
15 extended school year services, that consider the duration of programs  
16 and settings based on an assessment of behavior, social skills,  
17 communication, academics, and self-help skills;

18 (b) Daily schedules reflecting minimal unstructured time and active  
19 engagement in learning activities, including lunch, snack, and recess,  
20 and providing flexibility within routines that are adaptable to  
21 individual skill levels and assist with schedule changes, such as field  
22 trips, substitute teachers, and pep rallies;

23 (c) In-home and community-based training or a viable alternative  
24 that assists the student with acquisition of social and behavioral  
25 skills, including strategies that facilitate maintenance and  
26 generalization of those skills from home to school, school to home,  
27 home to community, and school to community;

28 (d) Positive behavior support strategies based on information, such  
29 as:

30 (i) Antecedent manipulation, replacement behaviors, reinforcement  
31 strategies, and data-based decisions; and

32 (ii) A behavior intervention plan developed from a functional  
33 behavioral assessment that uses current data related to target  
34 behaviors and addresses behavioral programming across home, school, and  
35 community-based settings;

36 (e) Beginning at any age, futures planning for integrated living,

1 work, community, and educational environments that considers skills  
2 necessary to function in current and postsecondary environments;

3 (f) Parent and family training and support, provided by qualified  
4 personnel with experience in autism spectrum disorder, that:

5 (i) Provides a family with skills necessary for a child to succeed  
6 in the home and community setting;

7 (ii) Includes information regarding resources such as parent  
8 support groups, workshops, videos, conferences, and materials designed  
9 to increase parent knowledge of specific teaching and management  
10 techniques related to the child's curriculum; and

11 (iii) Facilitates parental carryover of in-home training and  
12 includes strategies for behavior management and developing structured  
13 home environments and communication training so that parents are active  
14 participants in promoting the continuity of interventions across all  
15 settings;

16 (g) A suitable staff-to-student ratio appropriate to identified  
17 activities and as needed to achieve social and behavioral progress  
18 based on the child's developmental and learning level, including  
19 acquisition, fluency, maintenance, and generalization, that encourages  
20 work towards individual independence as determined by:

21 (i) Adaptive behavior evaluation results;

22 (ii) Behavioral accommodation needs across settings; and

23 (iii) Transitions within the school day;

24 (h) Communication interventions, including language forms and  
25 functions that enhance effective communication across settings, such as  
26 augmentative, incidental, and naturalistic teaching;

27 (i) Social skills supports and strategies based on social skills  
28 assessment and curriculum, and provided across settings, for example  
29 trained peer facilitators such as a circle of friends, video modeling,  
30 social stories, and role playing;

31 (j) Professional educator and staff support, such as training  
32 provided to personnel who work with students to assure the correct  
33 implementation of techniques and strategies described in the  
34 individualized education programs; and

35 (k) Teaching strategies based on peer reviewed and research-based  
36 practices for students with autism spectrum disorder, such as those  
37 associated with discrete-trial training, visual supports, applied

1 behavior analysis, structured learning, augmentative communication, or  
2 social skills training.

3 (2) As used in this section, "recess" means unstructured playtime.

4 (3) By September 1, 2008, the superintendent of public instruction  
5 shall develop recommendations for guidelines for autism-specific  
6 individualized education programs and shall submit the recommendations  
7 to the governor and the education committees of the legislature.

8 (4) By December 1, 2008, the superintendent of public instruction  
9 shall report the policy guidelines to school districts for the  
10 districts to use to develop and adopt their policies.

11 (5) By April 1, 2009, each school district shall use the guidelines  
12 developed under subsection (3) of this section to develop guidelines  
13 for autism-specific individualized education programs that address the  
14 unique needs of students with autism.

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